

Washington, April 27, 2004

"International perspectives on nuclear non-proliferation norms, focusing on the United States"

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I want to thank the Bipartisan Task Force on Non-Proliferation for including me in this panel. I look forward to our discussion after my brief presentation.

First, let me just make it clear that I do not speak today for the WMDC as such – for the commissioners or for their chairman Hans Blix. Nor do I speak in my earlier capacity as a Swedish ambassador. I represent only myself today.

We have been through turbulent times recently. Not only has the first large counterproliferation war occurred – but also different kinds of diplomatic non-proliferation efforts, notably with Libya, with Iran, and with North Korea. These efforts range from very successful to so far unsuccessful. Furthermore, an enormous clandestine procurement network masterminded by Pakistani scientists has been exposed.

The breakouts were more serious than we knew. North Korea, Libya, and earlier Iraq have made deliberate, sustained efforts, with middle-men, brokers and obscure companies supporting; and Iran has at least violated the NPT. Diplomacy is the answer to all of this, and has already been partly successful. Wars of counterproliferation will, I believe, not be the answer that works in the future.

The nuclear Wal-Mart was worse than we had anticipated. It can be contained, but it will be a difficult task, given that the flow of information and technology is so much greater than before. It nevertheless has to be done.

To what Jonathan Dean just said, let me add something about norms. First, I believe it is clear that nuclear non-proliferation norms are quite strong. The urge to have weapons is also strong among some very few states, but the norms against acquiring them is for the most part even stronger.

Second – the norms against using nuclear weapons are not only strong, but extremely strong. Just imagine – the first use since 1945 of nuclear weapons as an instrument of war would be an event of incomprehensible proportions.

It is problematic, therefore, that from both sides of the spectrum, both legal possessors and possible breakouts, there are statements indicating that the old-style large-scale deterrence – nuclear weapons deterring only nuclear weapons – may be giving way to thoughts about actually using nuclear weapons for distinct purposes – even non-strategic purposes.

Let me make clear here, when I mention both ends of the spectrum, that it is clearly much less alarming if a democracy possesses nuclear weapons than if a one-party state or a dictatorship does. But nevertheless, the two ends in fact connect, to a vicious circle. They do, because it will not hold up in the long run to pursue complete restraint for some, while at the same time widening one's own options and doctrines of use. It is not very credible as a line of argumentation, but more importantly, it will not work, given that incentives in national security are what they are, regardless whether for democracies or dictatorships.

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About the long run I am somewhat optimistic, myself, even if I doesn't sound like that. If the test moratorium holds, and if intensified diplomacy can work out tenable agreements with not only Iran, which seems to be within reach, but also North Korea, which is much more difficult, then I believe the norms will still be quite strong and can be further strengthened over time.

To strengthen norms, it is imperative in the medium and long term to diminish the incentives for acquiring nuclear weapons. That is, we must get much closer to solving the perennial regional problems in the Middle East, on the Korean peninsula and in South Asia. And we must diminish the potential of nuclear weapons, that is, render them unusable – which by and large they already are.

The view from outside, the international perspective, is very much oriented towards the United States. Even though there are eight nuclear weapons states, five

recognized by the NPT and three outside the treaty, the field is defined and dominated by the US. Therefore, when US administrations and representatives express worries about nuclear proliferation, I believe that it is the United States itself that can do the most about the problem. Not only through counter-proliferation, and perhaps not even mainly through that, but rather by taking the lead, by leading by example. Not by disarming tomorrow of course – but by looking beyond mere nuclear strength projection and focusing instead at the whole long-term picture.

It seems to me that parts of United States' nuclear non-proliferation policy today are counterproductive – counterproductive in relation to their own starting assumptions. In fact, some features of the present policy will practically secure that more nations than the eight will try to acquire nuclear weapons. And seen over a few decades, which is the way one must look at nuclear weapons policies, it is a hundred per cent certain that there will no longer be eight nuclear weapons states in a few decades. There will be several more, or there will be fewer. It is not going to happen that all other states will accept that eight select states will retain a monopoly on large-scale violence - which is what nuclear weapons are all about.

Counterproductive, how?

Nuclear weapons are the only real threat towards United States territory today. To put biological or chemical weapons on a par with nuclear is not good thinking, and to bundle them together into one big dangerous category (as was sometimes done before the war) leads to bad analysis and incorrect analogies, for example from Saddam's chemical weapons against his own citizens directly over to mushroom clouds over Manhattan. Of course biological and chemical weapons are terrible enough, but they are no strategic threat against the United States. Only nuclear weapons are. This is true for both states and terrorists as sources, but it is also important to remember that nuclear weapons in the hands of terrorists is a problem that starts and ends with states. It is only state possession, state leakage, state knowledge that may allow terrorists to acquire nuclear weapons in the first place.

Logically, therefore, no country would gain as much by diminishing the role of, and threat from, nuclear weapons as the United States. In view of this, parts of the present policies seem to me to be somewhat self-defeating. To plan for new generations of launchers and warheads several decades from now is to virtually guarantee that nuclear weapons will continue to play an important role for other countries. And today, to make budgetary allocations and plans for new types of weapons (low-yield etc) designed not for strategic deterrence but for use in specific

tactical situations in future conflicts, that signals more reliance rather than less on nuclear weapons – therefore also becoming self-defeating.

It is possible that the same goes for policies stated to the effect that nuclear weapons may deter against the use of chemical or biological weapons, and that they might even be used as retaliation against such weapons. This gives operational value to nuclear weapons and will constitute a constant stimulus to further acquisition; probably counterproductive to the non-proliferation aims and goals.

When the NPT was extended indefinitely in 1995, this was a very positive action led by the United States. To secure the extension, the delicate balance contained undertakings by the NWS to put in place both a fissile material cut-off and a comprehensive nuclear test ban. Neither has been done nine years later. This is puzzling to me. Both treaties would directly and clearly benefit the United States more than any other nation.

A comprehensive test ban would conserve US dominance in the field and slow down developments; even make it impossible for new proliferators to acquire working arsenals. And the FMCT would be a necessary, although not sufficient, part of an overall regime diminishing the role of nuclear weapons.

In almost all NPT areas and issues, United States is the leading power. Therefore, all in all, the single most important development at the present time for the full implementation of the NPT would be if the United States, as a democratic, responsible, dominant power would take the lead, and lead by example.

Thank you.